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Queen mine lawsuit trial date set

By Virginia F. Hodge
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The wrongful death lawsuit of a young mother who died as a result of a Haunted Mine Tour accident almost three years ago will go to trial Tuesday, Sept. 14, at the Cochise County Courthouse.

Amy Armstrong was 26 when she participated in the Bisbee Kiwanis Club's fundraising event at the Queen Mine Tour over Halloween 2001.

At around 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 30, 2001, Armstrong fell from the niche where she had positioned herself to scare visitors in the darkened mine tunnel.

Armstrong was straddling a 7-foot bracing timber as she had

the previous year, but this time it gave way, fell to the ground, and she became caught and crushed between the wall and the train.

Last Friday, Superior Court Judge Wallace R. Hoggatt heard arguments on final motions leading up to the trial, verified that scheduling conflicts were resolved, and went over logistics of the trial with participating attorneys.

The trial will be held in Hoggatt's division 3 courtroom, Tuesday through Friday from Sept. 14 through Oct. 8. After jury selection, attorneys for the plaintiff will present opening statements, then attorneys for the defendants.

The plaintiffs are Amy's hus-

band and two youngest children, represented by C. Michael Johns and James Fitzgerald; Amy's two older children, represented by Perry Hicks; and Amy's parents, represented by Jim Busby of Tucson.

Defendants are the city of Bisbee, represented by Stephen A. Mensing of Scottsdale; Phelps Dodge, represented by Gary L. Popham Jr. of Phoenix, and Kiwanis, represented by John J. Kastner Jr. of Tucson.

The Queen Mine is leased by the city of Bisbee from Phelps Dodge for tours. Haunting the mine at Halloween began with an arts group in 1992 to raise money for projects.